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Intertextuality as a strategy of glocalization: A comparative study of Nike's and Adidas's 2008 advertising campaigns in China

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Abstract: This paper examines within the theoretical framework of intertextuality the mobilization of glocalization as an international marketing strategy in Nike's and Adidas's 2008 advertising campaigns in China. Intertextuality is seen as a form of mediation through which the glocalization strategy conducted within the domain of global marking is taken up in the domain of advertising communication. The paper also assumes the interrelations of intertextual performance to value orientations and group affiliations. By analyzing intertextuality in relation to affinity groups, it aims to resolve to some extent the conundrum of Nike's more successful than Adidas in the sportswear market of China in a social-semiotic perspective. Two print ads constituting a representative example of the corpus were selected for a qualitative analysis. The comparative analysis of intertextuality reveals the contrasting methods of glocalization applied by Nike and Adidas in their 2008 advertising campaigns, thus offering an explanation for Nike's triumph in competition with Adidas in China.

Keywords: intertextuality, glocalization, affinity identity, advertising, Nike, Adidas

1 Introduction

The term “glocalization” was coined by sociologist Roland Robertson (1994, 1995) to capture the essence of the intricate process in which “the global is brought in conjunction with the local, and the local is modified to accommodate the global” and vice versa (Kumaravadivelu 2008: 45); the central insight here is the significance to maintain a balance between global homogenization and local customization. In international marketing studies, glocalization refers to the process whereby marketing strategies and products or services are tailored to particular local circumstances to meet local demand variations, while global or standardization features are also considered. Being identified as a badly

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productive marketing strategy, glocalization is not infrequently deployed by multinational corporations to promote products or services through the external communication of their brands in various forms of mass media to host markets without offending or undermining their values and beliefs (e.g. De Mooij 1998; Koller 2007; Matusitz 2011; Wu 2008). On the other hand, deemed as a holistic approach in exploring the nuanced juncture of global-local interactions, the glocalization idea is often applied as a useful lens for studying and evaluating global marketing communication (e.g. Androutsopoulos 2010; Kraidy 1999, Kraidy 2003; Oduro-Frimpong 2009). Stenglin (2012), for example, discusses how social and discursive practices of glocalization involved in the creation of a bonding icon around one commodity comes up with new social identities, particularly local subjectivities, and impact on consumption in the global marketplace.

With the assumption of heuristic values of glocalization that can be drawn upon for an account of issues at the juncture of the global-local nexus, this paper concerns itself with the analysis of mobilization of glocalization as an international marketing strategy by Nike and Adidas in their China-targeted 2008 advertising campaigns. The label “strategy” here refers not just to the varying degrees of complex, dialectical “asymmetrical interdependence” between the global and the local as often discussed in communication studies (e.g. Straubhaar 1991: 39; Sutikno and Cheng 2012; Tixier 2005); rather, it is also associated with discursive or textual practices, in this case intertextuality, that result in the unique outcome of glocalization in ads through the interpenetration and negotiation of the two forces. Put in a slightly different terms, the focus of this study is not on the internal adaptation of the two giant sports brands to the host market of China, but on the external communication of their brands through the outward-oriented discourse of their China-targeted ads. Taking ads as an excellent site for examination of the glocalization strategy that is mediated through intertextuality, this study by comparing and contrasting intertextual practices conducted by Nike and Adidas in their 2008 advertising campaigns aims to resolve the conundrum of Nike’s triumph over Adidas in the competition for market share in China.¹

Ads as a form of mediation are designed with specific audience members in mind (Dyer 1982). Following this, a sample analysis of intertextuality in the representative ads of Nike and Adidas was undertaken in relation to an affinity group that is actualized or created through the mediatization process whereby

¹ Nike enjoys the sustained higher market share than Adidas in China’s market (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/greatspeculations/2015/06/29/earnings-review-nike-continues-its-strong-run/#56c305cd5985>; accessed May 25, 2017).

the intended audience's perception and interpretation of social roles and values are organized and oriented (Johnson and Ensslin 2007: 13). The approach to studying intertextuality has been proved particularly suited to questions about affinity groups and identity (e.g. Ivanič 2015; Meân 2012; Meân et al. 2010; Krijnen and van Bauwel 2015). As noted by Bakhtin, behind the contact between texts that establishes relationships of intertextuality "is a contact of personalities and not of things" (Bakhtin 1986: 162). Genre, for example, is a primary means not only for dealing with recurrent social exigencies, but also for the expressive enactment of subjectivity; different genres implicate different subject positions and formations. In a similar vein, Hiramoto and Park (2010) claim that the connection of mediated texts to other texts or genres is often made for the achievement of "synthetic personalization" (Fairclough 1989) so as to make audiences feel they are "thousands of identical *yous*, with attitudes, values, and preoccupations ascribed to them" (Talbot 1995: 148, italics in the original). Within ads, the constitutive power of intertextuality likely lies in its provision of subject positions that are made available for intended audiences to claim or take up. Like the study of Feng and Wignell (2011), the active engagement of intended audiences in a set of intertextual interpretations is also assumed, whereby they come to affiliate and identify with ads with which they share these practices. Since interpretative processes are more or less mediated by intertextual practice, intertextuality can be taken as an analytical platform for an exploration of how the intended audience's affiliation to ads is to various degrees intertextually affected. Gee claims that members of an affinity group are primarily subject to a set of "distinctive social *practices* that create and sustain group affiliation" (Gee 2000: 105, italics in the original). The commitment of intertextual analysis to examining the constitution of an affinity group in ads is achievable, if we realize the nature of intertextuality as social practice. In the following I develop why intertextuality could be taken as a focus for investigation of the glocalization strategy as one of international marketing techniques of ads.

2 Intertextuality as a strategy of glocalization

Every media text is intrinsically intertextual (Bakhtin 1981, Bakhtin 1986; Kristeva 1980); ads, more than other mediatized texts, do not stand alone (e.g. Brown 1995; Cook 2001; Goldman and Papson 1994; Wernick 1991). Intertextual phenomena in ads can be categorized by relying upon a distinction between two types of intertextual relations: "manifest intertextuality" and "constitutive intertextuality" (or interdiscursivity) as described by Fairclough (1992) – texts are

seen as related to specific prior ads or to abstract sets of conventions including genres, situations, registers, social practices or communities of practices. Intertextuality in multimodal ads, it must be added, usually involves a number of semiotic materials such as language, image and layout, and its effect is often dependent upon their interaction in subtle and explicit ways. Sometimes, it is also possible for semiotic materials to move across modes or for one semiotic mode to be “resemiotized” (Iedema 2001, Iedema 2003) into another semiotic mode. As with other intertextual plays, the intersemiotic intertextual play is also proved as a useful way of bonding with the intended audience and creating a sense of community (Caple and Bednarek 2010; Bednarek and Caple 2010; Oostendorp 2015).

Bazerman states that “intertextuality is not just a matter of which other texts you refer to, but how you use them, what you use them for, and ultimately how you position yourself as a writer to them to make your own statement” (Bazerman 2004: 94). Intertextuality in ads as proved is motivated by, and associated with, the intention of advertisers to organize and orient intended audiences’ attitude and behavior, their identities, their experience and so forth (Feng and Wignell 2011; Li 2016; Kelly-Holmes 2000; Meân et al. 2010; O’Donnell 1994). The mobilization of intertextuality is widely believed to enhance the persuasive effect of ads by being incorporated to invite a particular audience response² while reducing the appearance of commercial nature. Under this interpretation placing the primary agency for intertextuality on advertisers, intertextuality in this paper is no longer viewed as a property of ads; instead, it has become a stylistic device, or “persuasive metatextuality” (Peterson 2005: 135), in a manner that shapes the experience of the audience with ads.

Aside from the shared trait of being goal-driven, there are at least three more interrelated reasons attributed to the treatment of intertextuality as a useful lens for investigating the employment of glocalization in ads. They are related primarily to a kinship or affiliation between the glocalization idea and promotion intertextuality promises, by means of which we are allowed to cross from one domain to the other without a massive change of gear when examining the marketing strategy of glocalization. In this paper, intertextual relations in ads are assumed as a form of mediation through which the glocalization strategy

² By this, I am not suggesting that intertextual performance is not subject to risk. Furthermore, according to the poststructuralist turn in criticism, viewers as agents may decode ads in varying ways and the success of intertextual play is largely contingent on their intertextual competence or knowledge. But this doesn’t preclude common intertextual themes viewers may have when using interpretive practices to form meaning of ads (Kenyon 2006).

capitalized on in the domain of international marketing is taken up in the domain of advertising communication.

First and foremost, the notion of intertextuality nicely seizes the global-local dialogical interaction, despite the agency of advertisers underlined throughout the whole process of intertextuality. As has been incontrovertibly argued, intertextuality is indeed a matter of decontextualization and recontextualization of kinds of semiotic element and convention (e.g. Bauman and Briggs 1990; Briggs and Bauman 1992; Linell 1998). In the case of ads, both verbal and visual texts from other sources or contexts are decontextualized through selection and adoption and then recontextualized through use and adaptation. Following this, the ways in which the kinds of semiotic element and convention are recontextualized not only provides a discursive frame for intertextual practice in its own right: our very understanding of what intertextuality means depends to a greater or lesser extent on the constitutive role of that meta-dimension. The idea of intertextuality as itself subject to a process of discursive construction is very much in tune with the dialectical complexity of global-local interaction accentuated by the concept of glocalization.

Secondly, taking intertextuality as the analytical platform has the advantage to underline the substantial influence of host markets the glocalization idea highlights in the global-local interaction. Intertextuality can be construed as a dynamic context of practice, since it suggests an attempt to generalize over a multiplicity of specific contexts where the kinds of semiotic element and convention coming from different sources and contexts are recontextualized or re-embedded in new contexts of use. This conceptualization of intertextuality directs our attention to the question of what semiotic resources can or should be adopted and adapted during the conduct of intertextuality. Peterson makes it explicit by claiming that media intertextualities, being “a characteristic of social action,” are of indexical significance (Peterson 2005: 130–131). Following this, in addition to be a marker of cultural identity, the game of intertextuality in media is also an opportunity offered for audiences to participate in community. As suggested by Porter (1986), intertextual phenomena in ads should be construed and approached as social practice, as more or less stable conventions of a particular discourse community. Thus, not only does the interpretation of intertextuality as a dynamic context of practice echo the earlier point of view about the impact of host markets on the global-local interaction; it also gives prominence to the constraint possibly imposed by the structure of host markets on the conduct of intertextuality.

This leads to the third, evenly crucial reason concerned with a more perfect congruity of the reflexive dimension of intertextuality with the habitually accommodative practice of glocalization. Bakhtin suggests viewing intertextuality

as discursive practice by placing great faith in the importance of context: “The text lives only by coming into contact with another context (with context). Only at this point of contact between texts does a light flash, illuminating both the posterior and anterior, joining a given text to a dialogue” (Bakhtin 1986: 162).

The clear implication is that each act of textual production both presupposes antecedent texts and anticipates prospective ones. In making this point Ravotas and Berkenkotter (1998) maintain that, in addition to the retrospective side, being selective transformations of prior texts and forms or structures, recontextualization has a prospective aspect, addressing a particular group of audience and thereby partly anticipating their interpretation. Suggested as such, recontextualization is more a process influenced by the dialogical engagement of home contexts with host contexts that usually involves a certain element of metalinguistic articulation. This articulation of intertextuality brings to the fore the importance to achieve the alignment of intertextual practice with audience needs and expectations for an anticipated impact or consequence in the discourse community for which intertextuality is performed and interpreted (Bauman 2004; Porter 1986), which is profoundly resonant with the motivations behind the embrace of glocalization in global marketing.

At this point it is also crucial to emphasize that recontextualization by no means refers merely to the repetition of texts or discourses in a new context, but usually amounts to “reframing” (Goffman 1974). Van Leeuwen (1993) has identified four categories of transformation in this process – “deletion,” “rearrangement,” “substitution” and “addition” (see also Fairclough 2003: 139–140). Additionally, the success of intertextuality in ads for multinational corporations as suggested depends in a significant part upon advertisers’ knowledge of what can be presupposed and their ability to effectively borrow that community’s discourse values that contribute to the maintenance or, possibly, the definition of the community.³ Seen in this way, intertextuality like glocalization is linked crucially with issues of identity, agency and difference, making it a useful tool for investigating identity constructions in public communication. Since intertextuality more or less marked or cued by kinds of semiotic element and sets of convention provides points of focus for exploring solidarity building and affiliation, it is semiotic materials adopted as well as the ways in which they are adapted to create and sustain group affiliations that I will address here. Let us

³ This is not to deny that, while constrained by preferences and prejudices of the discourse community, advertisers may work to assert the will against those community constraints to effect change.

now look at the background of this study and at the methods used to collect and analyze samples of the ads for both brands.

3 Background and selection of ads

Nike and Adidas have become so immensely popular in China that they are literally household names there especially among young people. The competition between the two rivals over market share in China is continuously rigorous and has never been ceased. This becomes particularly apparent at the advent of the Beijing Olympic Games. Adidas sponsored the games itself and the Chinese Olympic committee. Torchbearers, officials and volunteers were all clad in the brand; so too were Chinese champions. Nike fought back with the traditional strategy of countless celebrity sponsorships on the Chinese teams in 22 of 28 Olympic sports and on Liu Xiang, the winner of gold medal in the men's 110 meter hurdles at the Athens Olympics.

Besides, Nike unleashed in various media outlets a set of advertising campaigns, including “Competition First” in *Sports Weekly*,⁴ “Who I Am” on television stations, and “Training of Chinese Athletes” on its Chinese homepage. Despite the difference both in media outlet and theme, these three series of campaigns share a number of features in terms of composition and page layout, chief verbal information, modality, colors chosen, and head-and-shoulder shot of a celebrity Chinese athlete. By contrast, Adidas launched one advertising campaign only, which comes under the standard slogan “Together in 2008 – Impossible is nothing” across the media outlets of television, newspaper, magazine, and its Chinese homepage. Both brands selected a different Chinese athlete as the model. Observed in the Nike's ads is always the choice of an athlete participating in individual events, while all the Chinese athletes selected for the Adidas ads take part in games of team competition.

For this paper, two ads were selected for comparative analysis from a collection of 56 print ads, collected from the advertising series mentioned above. The two ads are representative for each brand in many respects, including verbal information, composition and layout, degree of modality, choice of colors and a Chinese athlete, and representation of social actors. Additionally, they are particularly illustrative of the processes of intertextuality and resemiotization. The questions to be addressed in the paper are therefore:

⁴ *Sports Weekly* is the most influential sports newspaper of China by circulation according to China Dominant-Journalism Development Center.

- How is intertextuality performed and manifested in the ads?
- Are there any similarities and differences in the practice of intertextuality between the brands?
- What is the function of an intertextual reference or allusion?

These questions are expected to be answered with the aim to account for the more successful of Nike than Adidas in the Chinese market. The process of intertextual play in ads, as noted earlier, reveals authorial identity-projection, which offers intended audiences an opportunity to claim and sustain their membership of an affinity group. This suggests the success of ads is to a large extent dependent upon the creation of a sense of group affiliation derived from intertextual interpretation of intended audiences. With this point in mind, it is important to briefly address the potential group of consumers both brands intend to reach or target. It has been found that like most multinational companies Nike and Adidas market their brands toward young urban adults in China aged 18–35 years with high education and income; additionally, they tend to emphasize more individualism and modernity values than collectivism and traditional values in their advertising (Cheng and Schweitzer 1996; Zhang and Shavitt 2003). Labelled as the X-generation, young urban adults in China represent a special demographic group that is becoming more culturally adapted to both China and the West (Ong 1998). In general, the Chinese X-generation is more receptive to advertising communication and to welcome Western values and ideals (Modern Advertising 1999), seems to share a very specific sense of proximity to parts of Western culture, especially individualism and independence (Zhang and Shavitt 2003), and has a bank of semiotic knowledge for unpacking the multimodal intertextual play in ads (O'Donohoe 1997).

4 Analysis of intertextual play: similarities and differences

For this comparative, qualitative analysis, two print ads constituting a representative example of the corpus were selected. The Adidas ad as shown in Figure 1 was drawn from the campaign “Together in 2008 – Impossible is nothing” and the Nike ad (Figure 2) come from its “Competition First” series. The sample analysis was conducted by drawing upon the theory of social semiotics (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996, Kress and van Leeuwen 2001) that connects semiotics to social and discursive practices and the notion of resemiotization (Iedema 2001, Iedema 2003) that captures the movement of meanings across modes. The analysis of the

sample ads that describes the ways in which the intertextual play of each engages viewers and draws them into a cultural community through the establishment of an affinity group is illustrative rather than exhaustive.

4.1 Similarities

The ads for Nike and Adidas, as noted above, chose a Chinese athlete as their model for constituting local orientation, thus being adapted to local influences and references. Within each of the sample ads the recontextualized English slogans are also apparent – “Nothing is Impossible.” and “Just do it.”, and logos – the Three Stripes and the Swoosh, respectively. Defined as global through corporate dissemination, both the slogans and logos that have already acquired iconic status in China represent an instance of parodic allusion. Therefore, not only do both of the ads make an explicit allusion to a distinct brand personality, but also implicitly assume, and exploit, the audience’s knowledge of the brands, aligning them to the community of belonging. But the extent of country-of-origin effects this intertextual allusion is intended to make is varying between them, which is to be explained in reference to differences in their intertextual practice.

4.2 Differences

Differences in the intertextual practice of the two ads are observed more in number than similarities they share. The multimodal feature of ads suggests the intertwining and connection between intertextual instances within an ad. For explanatory and interpretive analysis, the intertextual differences between the two ads will not be detected and discussed individually; rather, the focus here is on the different functions they have that can be used for an account of how different methods of glocalization are deployed in each. For instance, both of the sample ads select a Chinese athlete as the model, but the intertextual allusion they are intended to make is differing by virtue of the athlete’s background. The model choice is able to allude intertextually to many discourses and genres such as competition, the sports event the athlete does well, and the achievement he or she has made. Nevertheless, while the hurdler Liu Xiang is able to invoke the individual event of hurdles, a basketball player like Sui Feifei, by contrast, refers intertextually to the team competition of basketball game.

One of the most ostensible differences between the sample ads is associated with the use of the transnational slogan. The use of the globally standard slogan

does not mean no adaptation is taken during this process. In the ad for Adidas it is found the companion of the Chinese translation 没有不可能 to 'Nothing is Impossible.' Venuti (2009) contends that translation represents a unique case of intertextuality that involves three sets of intertextual relations. In this case, the Chinese translation remains quite faithful to the propositional content of the transnational English slogan; it also basically maintains the same semantic line. This intertextual practice, though, results in re-articulation of properties of the English slogan embedded in the representation of Adidas to Chinese viewers, as well as a "refraction" of the "priorities of the recipient culture" (Burke 2007: 20). This is primarily because of the placement of the Chinese translation below or after the referential addition of 与隋菲菲一起 2008 ('together with Sui Feifei 2008') but prior to its source text. The model of this ad, Sui Feifei as one of basketball players in China's team, is able to invoke the discursive space of team competition. Being connected in meaning and direction with the Chinese translation, "与隋菲菲一起 2008" that presupposes a cultural mindset in consistency with the one dominant in China refers interdiscursively to the stereotyped group characteristics of collectivism and its cultural importance for group goal achievement there. Further evidence of this interdiscursive reference to collectivism is illustrated, and thereof reinforced, in a distinctive array of interrelated ways. Firstly, the model's act of shooting refers openly to the sports game of basketball play that demands collective efforts and close cooperation between team members. The second way is concerned with the evocation of the most blatant stereotype of collectivism producible by the image of the player receiving support from the masses. Finally, the choice of the black-white color for sketching of the masses in the same way as in *Schindler's List* alludes to the genre of film, and the tremendous momentum this film generates, in turn, alludes to the marvelous spectacle connected with the support of the masses.

The decision to make use of this cultural allusion is probably taken primarily with Chinese viewers in mind, but the properties of the globally standard slogan "Nothing is Impossible." are completely lost in the adaptive, recontextualized translation because of the presupposition of collectivistic values and beliefs. In line with the "problematic, contestable" meanings entailed by its position on the right (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996: 187), the English slogan seems re-embedded only for the intertextual representation of the cultural version of group goal achievement. The construction of a collectivistic cultural identity in this ad is also complemented by the juxtaposition of the Beijing Olympics' emblem to the Olympics' symbol in the top right-hand corner. The ad's allusion to collectivism in interpreting Olympism, thus, links traditional Chinese culture to a global concern. To be sure, while delineating images of localization, this ad meanwhile attends to specific elements of Adidas and its

home culture to engage a glocalization consciousness through positioning the brand as global by retaining the English slogan and the Three Strips. Such a glocalization perspective allowed Adidas to foreground collectivism and localization through the juxtaposition of collectivistic values and its global concerns.

Conversely, without being translated into the local language of Chinese, “Just do it.” refers explicitly to Nike’s distinct brand personality, presupposing who is the intended audience. The implicit presupposition of who is the intended audience is enhanced by the placement of the English slogan on the left, a place for “the Given” and take-for-granted information (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996: 187). Individualism is being repeatedly highlighted as the theme of the Nike’s ad through the adoption and adaptation of the local yet globally available semiotic resource of Liu Xiang’s face by giving it new forms, meanings and functions. Firstly, it cannot be too easy to identify the interdiscursive allusion of the model to the individual game of hurdles in Olympic Games. Secondly, while still bearing traces from the earlier context of the model’s epoch-making victory at the Athens Olympics, the direct gaze entails an explicit allusion to the individualistic value of looking cool. Then, being head-and-shoulder photographed, contrastive in tone, and frontally presented in the center, the face credits more attention than others. The face is made a potent cultural symbol of individualism by virtue of the association of emotional expression with the paramount value of individual freedom in individualistic cultures. The calm and tenacious face, moreover, could be taken as an example of intertextual reference to his withdrawal from the competition in the Beijing Olympics. It is worth noting that this ad for Nike was released just 12 hours later after this incident. This explicit form of interdiscursivity is not only metaphorically illustrated by the sepia-colored side of the face on the left, but as well anchored by the six love-statements in Chinese found to the left. All the six love-statements, for example, 爱比赛 (‘Love competition’) and 爱运动, 即使它伤了你的心 (‘Love sports, even if it has hurt your heart’), that lay emphasis on personal interests yield the evocation of such individualistic values as freedom, enjoyment, having ambition, aiming for success, expressing a unique personality, and taking risks. It is also important to point out that appeals to personal goal achievement are visually presented through the lighted side of the face placed on the right where it is positioned as “the New,” possibility and hope (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996: 187). In this sense, the interdiscursive allusion to individualism moves the discourse of the victory in the past to that on the present setback and to the discursive space of personal goal achievement in the future.

It now becomes clear that the polarized pattern of composition adopted in the Nike’s ad is aimed to produce two different discursive spaces with the aim of making a contrast. The model’s face is an intertextual amalgam of materials

from personal, national and transnational events, chronologically arranged and cut to the ad. The visual works in tandem with the verbal to create the construction of the model as an ambitious, confident, proactive and self-reliant athlete of adamancy of a psychokinesis. The visual is clearly the dominant mode of representation, with the verbal extending or complementing the information provided by the visual. The face itself, it is worth noting, actually creates vigorous engagement on the part of the viewers through giving them a sense of intimacy, being demanded, and being treated as “one of us,” as metaphorically illustrated by the head-and-shoulder shot, the direct gaze, and the frontal angle, respectively (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996). It is through this visual design that the viewers are invited to share the exciting experience or moment that may bring them success, setback, or hope. This effect, however, cannot be achieved in the Adidas ad by virtue of the model who is represented distant and collectivized although the center/margin composition it adopted.

5 Discussion and conclusion

Glocalization as an international marketing strategy is being conducted differently by multinational corporations across geographical regions. The comparative analysis of intertextuality between Nike's and Adidas's 2008 advertising campaigns shows that both brands adopt different strategic methods of glocalization. The ad for Adidas reveals how the localization of the globally circulating semiotic material, i.e. its English slogan, creates novel opportunities for the staging of collectivism. The Nike's ad, then, presents the globalization of individualism through the reproduction of a global style and the re-articulation of personal, national and transnational events related to the Chinese track-and-field superstar as the model. Adidas's adaptation of cultural proximity, from the cultural perspective, seems to be more successful in competition with Nike on the Chinese market. However, the convergence strategy adopted by Adidas does not necessarily mean successful; nor does the practice of divergence strategy in the Nike's ad mean unsuccessful. In this context, success is suggestive to be measured by the advertiser's ability to know what can be presupposed and effectively borrow traces of the Chinese X-generation as the intended audiences to create an ad that contributes to the maintenance and, possibly, the definition of this particular community. Cultural proximity, therefore, must be narrowly defined and evaluated by being proximate to the community of intended audiences rather than to the community of Chinese people as a whole, where the community may be quite heterogeneous despite the existence of shared membership markers.

The analysis reveals both of the international brands engaged differently in various kinds of semiotic material and thereby identified with their respective affinity group that values what intertextuality represents. The Nike's success has to a large extent depended on the designer's consciousness to reach the community of intended audiences through intertextual appeals to individualistic values and beliefs. The specificity of its address to this consumerist caste is evident. As analyzed earlier, the Nike's ad shows a high level of affinity, in that it not only includes lots of detail but also comprises an image of details, for example, the close-up of Liu Xiang's face and his facial expression. In a sharp contrast, the Adidas ad shows low affinity, because its image, being lack of details and dominated by a white-black and grey background, conveys little but an air of depression to link it to a specific affinity group of the locality.

The high affinity presented in the Nike's ad is enhanced through the inter-discursive process of "spatiotemporal extension" (Park 2010), whereby Liu Xiang's achievement in the past at the Athens Olympics is linked up with his setback at the present Olympic Games. Since the epoch-making victory of Liu Xiang at the preceding Olympics, he had already become an idol in the mind of the Chinese X-generation. As his past triumph is presented as having a continuing connection with, and relevance to, the present, the ad establishes continuity between these events and the intended audience's discursive space, thereby inculcating in the intended audience expectations about what an idol is supposed to do when in trouble. The engagement of intended audiences with this ad is further increased through the adoption of an ideal reading path that works in Western culture where writing systems have text processing conventionally start in the top left-hand corner. In this case, the six love-statements is the starting point of this reading path; acting as a framing device, the red color used for the presentation of the verbal information creates a connection between English and Chinese (Kress and van Leeuwen 2002). Clearly, while maintaining genre specificity through the recontextualization of its globally standard slogan and logo and the adoption of an ideal reading path in West, Nike's way of glocalization pays special attention to building up cultural proximity that focuses on the personal interests of the Chinese X-generation who is in favor of individualistic values.

The designer of the Adidas ad, then, seems highly skilled in lingua-cultural mediation to capture a unique Chinese view of goal achievement and its inter-relations to collective efforts as a prerequisite. Adidas's emphasis on collectivism reflects cultural proximity that focuses on intertextually modifying their ads and symbolically connecting their adapted ads to China's traditional values of collectivism. If recognizing the use of its globally standard slogan and logo, Adidas does not completely abandon its brand identity in the conduct of cultural

proximity, although a distinctive specificity of genre is not reserved. In this case, cultural proximity embraces local elements and shortens Adidas's distance from local customers of Chinese people. However, given the reception of this ad being placed in a context where the host culture of collectivism is featured as especially dominant, in theory the general Chinese viewers are treated as the intended audience or potential consumers. Alternatively stated, no special affinity identity is intertextually constructed for any particular social groups including the Chinese X-generation. In this regard, what is defined cultural proximity to the general Chinese people actually is cultural alienation from the particular group of the Chinese X-generation.

In concluding, while Adidas put emphasis on localization of its brand with the use of cultural values of collectivism to constitute local orientation, Nike managed to glocalize its brand identity by integrating the local into the global through the extraction of the model's face and reshaping it to be re-embedded into an overall global style for the orientation towards individualistic values and belief. To the intended audience of the Chinese X-generation, individualistic appeals of Nike are more prevailing and successful than collectivistic appeals of Adidas. Nike's integration of cultural proximity to the intended audience with genre proximity, to a large extent, explains why Nike is more successful in the Chinese market than Adidas that integrates cultural alienation from the intended audience with genre proximity.

The findings of this study may offer advertisers for multinational corporations an opportunity to reflect on what they select and use in the design of ads, and on the ways intertextuality may impinge on audiences' attitudes and engagement. In order to achieve the purpose of promotion in the host market, it is suggestive for them to align the selection of semiotic resources and the ways in which they are adapted to individual expectations of intended audiences that allow for local variations, while it raises a requirement for situated intertextual knowledge as part of professional competence.

As a final point, I should not forget to present some limitations of this study. Based on a data of ads collected for both brands at a specific point of time with reference to the 2008 Beijing Olympics, this study examining intertextuality in ads provides a synchronic but not diachronic account of different methods of glocalization Nike and Adidas applied in the Chinese market. The qualitative analysis can be enriched by engaging with a quantitative, diachronic investigation for the deepening of understanding why Nike enjoys higher market shares than Adidas in China. In analysis, the study assumed the competence and engagement of the intended audience in intertextual interpretation. However, from the point of view of audience reception, it is unclear whether, and to what extent, Nike has been more successful than Adidas in the competition for

China's sportswear market. As a point of suggestion for future study, an analysis of multisemiotic intertextual practice such as the one demonstrated in this paper could be complemented by ethnographic observation of audiences as actors of intertextual interpretation (cf. Androutsopoulos 2010; Chandrasoma et al. 2004; O'Donohoe 1997) and analysis of interpretive process (cf. Furukawa 2010; Kenyon 2006).

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